

**FEATURING BEST PRACTICES
OF STATE AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

**Performance Norms and Procedures
Standards of Performance**

**Virginia Department of Health
Thomas Jefferson Health District
implemented this best practice
in September 1998**

*Qualifying under the
Best Practices catalogue*

3 Provide Capabilities
34 Develop resource capabilities
341 Integrate physical and human resources

**Best Practice Summary
(how it works, how you measure it)**

A Standard of Performance (SOP) is a performance norm that describes the rationale and procedures for providing effective public health service in a given subject area. Each SOP includes subject, program, objective, authority, procedures, and date initiated/revised. SOPs for the Health District are electronically filed in program folders and maintained on a centralized file service, accessible to all staff at all times. Each SOP has a cover sheet that introduces the standard and designates the staff classifications accountable to the SOP. Before the SOPs are placed on the file server, they are reviewed by a representative sample of staff and suggested

improvements are incorporated. New releases and revisions are announced to staff through electronic mail.

Impact on the Process Organizational Performance (OUTCOMES)

SOPs define best practices for staff throughout the Thomas Jefferson Health District, and in all program areas. Incorporating staff into the review process strengthens the quality and utility of SOPs and promotes "buy-in" by the users. Storing SOPs electronically on a centralized file server enables rapid, widespread distribution of revisions and assures that staff will have access to the latest version at all times.

Best Practice Qualification

SOPs will be the foundation for a District Quality Assurance Plan currently under development. Once complete, this system will incorporate every program and activity performed by the agency. Staff will have immediate access to the recommended standard and process for activities as basic as the receipt and handling of agency telephone calls, or as complex as the process and form letters used when issuing an enforcement letter/notice of violation within the environmental health program. Performance evaluators will have a reference for timeliness, quality, and quantity in gaining an appropriate level of performance from staff. In addition, SOPs will enable work teams to conduct internal audits and process improvements in a standardized format.

For Additional Information

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